

WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COMMITTEE: HEALTH SERVICES

DATE: OCTOBER 24, 2014

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: OTHERS PRESENT:

SUPERVISORS SOKOL
CONOVER
FRASIER
TAYLOR
MCDEVITT

REPRESENTING WESTMOUNT HEALTH FACILITY:
LLOYD COTÉ, ADMINISTRATOR
BETSY HENKEL, COMPTROLLER
REPRESENTING THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH:
PAT AUER, DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH/PATIENT SERVICES
GINELLE JONES, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH DIVISION
TAMMIE DELORENZO, CLINICAL & FISCAL INFORMATICS COORDINATOR
TAWN DRISCOLL, FISCAL MANAGER
JOAN SADY, CLERK OF THE BOARD
FRANK E. THOMAS, BUDGET OFFICER
SUPERVISORS SEEGER
SIMPSON
TRAVIS WHITEHEAD, RESIDENT OF THE TOWN OF QUEENSBURY
DON LEHMAN, *THE POST STAR*
SARAH MCLENITHAN, SECRETARY TO THE CLERK OF THE BOARD

Mr. Sokol called the meeting of the Health Services Committee to order at 10:00 a.m.

Motion was made by Mr. McDevitt, seconded by Mr. Conover and carried unanimously to approve the minutes of the previous Committee meeting, subject to correction by the Clerk of the Board.

Privilege of the floor was extended to Pat Auer, Director of Public Health/Patient Services, who distributed copies of the agenda to the Committee members; *a copy of the agenda is on file with the minutes.*

Commencing the Agenda review, Ms. Auer presented a request to increase the fee charged for nursing visits from \$170 to \$200 per visit effective January 1, 2015. She pointed out the fee had not been increased since 2010, and noted although Medicare and Medicaid were unlikely to pay the entire cost per visit, she felt demonstrating their increasing costs would assist the County when negotiations commenced regarding rates with the State.

Mr. Conover questioned how this rate compared to others and Ms. Auer replied it was less than what others charged. Tammie DeLorenzo, Clinical & Fiscal Informatics Coordinator, advised the rate the County charged was much less than the regional rates. She explained they utilized the cost reporting mechanism required by Medicaid and Medicare to determine the cost per visit for all the disciplines. She said the \$200 fee was more in line with what the actual expenses were. She apprised when the State created a Medicaid rate they utilized the lowest expense listed; therefore, she advised, to ensure a suitable rate was established it was necessary to demonstrate higher expenses.

Motion was made by Mr. Taylor, seconded by Mr. McDevitt and carried unanimously to approve the request as outlined above and the necessary resolution was authorized for the November 21, 2014 Board meeting. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes.*

Ms. Auer requested authorization for Sharon Schaldone, Assistant Director of Patient Services, to attend the Home Care Association of New York Quality Symposium at the Hilton Hotel in Albany,

New York on November 19, 2014. She said the program would focus on quality improvement initiatives, tools and resources for clinical conditions that were emerging new priorities for health care agencies focused on improving patient outcomes. She noted the funding was available within the budget to cover the cost of the conference.

Motion was made by Mr. Conover, seconded by Mrs. Frasier and carried unanimously to approve the request as presented. *A copy of the Authorization to Attend Meeting or Convention is on file with the minutes.*

Ms. Auer requested to Amend the Departmental Table of Organization to create and fill the temporary position of part-time Health Educator for the WIC (Women, Infants and Children) Program, Grade 14, annual base salary of \$36,093 prorated to 24 hours per week. She explained the position was 100% grant funded through the release of the unallocated funding line in the WIC Program. She stated the position would be eliminated at the end of the grant year when the special project was completed. She said there was an employee who was currently working in a per diem capacity for up to 20 hours per week; however, she advised, due to the additional hours it was necessary to create the part-time position.

Mr. Conover asked if this position was included in the 2015 County Budget. Tawn Driscoll, Fiscal Manager, advised they received written notification from the State on October 14, 2014 that the grant funding was approved; therefore, she said, the position and funding would be added to the 2015 County Budget. She noted there would be no impact to the County Budget, as the position was 100% funded through WIC. Ms. Auer noted although they received verbal confirmation of the award in August of this year she delayed putting through the request to create and fill the position until the written notification of the award was received. Mr. Taylor questioned whether the unemployment costs were covered by the State when the project was completed and the position was eliminated and Ms. Driscoll said she was unsure. She pointed out the current employee in the position was previously in another temporary position funded through WIC grant funding; therefore, she said, it was feasible another temporary position could become available through WIC grant funding once this project was completed. Ms. Auer suggested the question be further discussed at the November 12, 2014 Personnel Committee meeting. She reiterated her initial plan was to increase hours of the per diem employee; however, she said, she learned per Civil Service Law this was not permissible. Mr. Driscoll added there were no costs relating to health and dental insurances, and retirement required for this position.

Motion was made by Mr. Conover, seconded by Mrs. Frasier and carried unanimously to approve the request as presented and refer same to the Personnel Committee. *Copies of the Request to Create New Position and Notice of Intent to Fill Vacant Position forms are on file with the minutes.*

Ms. Auer requested to Amend the 2014 County Budget in the amount of \$1,200 to reflect the receipt of a portion of the Bioterrorism Grant. Ms. Driscoll explained the grant commenced on July 1, 2014 and terminated on June 30, 2015; therefore, she said, she was utilizing a portion of the funds to pay telephone, postage and gasoline expenses.

Motion was made by Mr. Conover, seconded by Mrs. Frasier and carried unanimously to approve the request as presented and forward same to the Finance Committee. *A copy of the Request to Amend the County Budget is on file with the minutes.*

Ms. Auer presented a request for transfer of funds from Budget Code A.4054.0060.444, Early Intervention-Education Expenses, to Budget Code A.4010.230, Health Services, Automotive

Equipment, in the amount of \$17,000 to purchase a new vehicle. Ms. Driscoll stated they were down four fleet vehicles, of which only one could be repaired. She said one new vehicle would be purchased through the Capital Reserve Fund for vehicles; therefore, she advised, a transfer was required to ensure there was a sufficient amount of funding to cover the cost of purchasing a new vehicle for their fleet.

Motion was made by Mr. Conover, seconded by Mrs. Frasier and carried unanimously to approve the request as presented and forward same to the Finance Committee. *A copy of the Request for Transfer of Funds form is on file with the minutes.*

Ms. Auer apprised there were no pending items to discuss this month. She commented that a comparison of CHHA (Certified Home Health Agency) referrals for 2013 versus 2014 indicated an overall decrease in referrals from last year. Ms. Driscoll advised the Revenues and Expense Comparison Report displayed consistency from this year to last year. She pointed out although they may not achieve the amount of revenue they budgeted for this year, their expenses would come in under budget. She said the goal was to ensure the budget remained the same or less than that of the previous year.

Ms. Driscoll advised that attachment #2 in the agenda packet was a Budget analysis of the Health Services Department as of October 20, 2014. She stated that year-to-date salaries reflected a decrease of \$22,781.38. She said the salaries continued to remain less than the previous year because they were utilizing per diem staff to assist with nursing coverage; thereby decreasing the overtime and benefit expenses. She pointed out the reason the revenues appeared to be much lower than that of last year was because they were closing out the month earlier than they had previously done.

Ms. Wood questioned whether any measures were in place to address the ebola virus since the first case of an infected person in New York State had recently come to fruition. Ms. Auer stated she felt the plan was a work in progress. She advised in light of the recent emergence of cases of the ebola virus in the United States, improvements would be made with regards to managing infection control. She said although she did not have all the answers the CDC (Center for Disease Control) and the New York State Health Department were working on developing an effective management plan for the virus. She advised a determination was required as to how much of the Commissioner of the New York State Department of Health's directive needed to be followed by places such as Warren County that did not offer primary care clinics where sick people were likely to come for treatment. She pointed out since their office had limited space she felt certain portions of the Commissioners orders were inapplicable to them such as the requirements for a special bathroom and location designated for these particular patients to isolate them from others. She commented her Department would do everything required of them to be legally compliant with the orders.

Ginelle Jones, Assistant Director of Public Health Division, advised an Emergency Preparedness meeting took place this week, which included many of the partnering agencies such as representatives from the local EMS (Emergency Medical Services) agencies, Fire Departments, and the Office of Emergency Services. She said Jamie Schrammel had been providing training with the most up-to-date information available to EMS representatives. She said they were compiling all of the different information they received from the various State agencies to ensure there was not a disconnect from agency to agency. She noted they had a good working relationship with all of their sponsoring agencies. She pointed out the Glens Falls Hospital was directly responsible for carrying out the Commissioner's orders, as the orders were predominately written for hospitals. She said the Glens Falls Hospital had been working, planning and drilling for the ebola virus. She mentioned a

forum took place last week with representatives from the Glens Falls Hospital, Public Health and some of the other sponsoring agencies that explained to attendees how they coordinated their plans. She said although all of the answers were not available at this time, she had confidence in the skills of the regional healthcare providers. She advised they were awaiting official written documentation from the New York State Department of Health on recommendations and guidance which they were obligated to follow. She explained the New York State Department of Health reviewed the guidance and information provided by the CDC and then made their own recommendations; therefore, she said, there was a delay in receiving the information. She commented considering all the information that was available to them they were as prepared as they could be at this time.

Ms. Auer mentioned the local Health Centers needed to be involved, as well since individuals presenting symptoms associated with the ebola virus could seek treatment at their facilities. Ms. Jones added in many cases their agency served as a resource to interpret and assist other agencies such as schools and doctors offices in developing plans. She stated there were many areas they had knowledge in such areas as contact tracing, personal protection, etc. that needed to be built upon specifically for the ebola virus.

Mr. Conover requested an update on the flu vaccine clinics. Ms. Auer advised they had been conducting flu vaccine clinics around the County. As an alternative, Ms. Auer stated, individuals could also get a flu vaccine at a participating local pharmacy. She said she was hopeful the ebola virus would heighten individuals awareness so they would get a flu shot. Mr. Conover asked if there was a shortage of the vaccine and Ms. Auer replied in the negative.

Mr. McDevitt apprised he had watched an interview with a doctor on CNBC where the doctor had stated you could catch the ebola virus from touching something on a subway that someone with ebola had touched. He questioned whether this was factual. Ms. Jones advised the individual would have had to come into contact with the blood or bodily fluid of an infected individual in order to be exposed to the virus. Ms. Auer added one of the challenges with any disease was not only taking care of the ill but also the worried individuals that were well. Ms. Jones commented the main goal was to ensure individuals had access to the resources necessary to be as prepared as possible. Ms. Auer encouraged the Supervisors to refer any constituents with questions and/or concerns to their office for assistance.

This concluded the Health Services portion of the meeting and the Westmount Health Facility portion of the meeting commenced after a brief recess.

Privilege of the floor was extended to Lloyd Côté, Administrator of Westmount Health Facility, who distributed copies of the agenda to the Committee members; *a copy of the agenda is on file with the minutes.*

Commencing the agenda review, Mr. Cote presented a request to Amend Resolution No. 478 of 2014 to authorize the additional repair fee to Rozell North in the amount of \$2,554 to replace/install a new four inch 375 ADA backflow preventer as stated in the amended agreement with Rozell North. He explained when Rozell North replaced the water main pipe for the Westmount Health Facility they discovered the ADA backflow preventer on the sprinkler system required replacement. He noted since the cost to repair the part was about the same as replacing it, they elected to replace it. He stated the costs for this repair should have been included in the costs to replace the water main pipe; therefore, he advised, an amendment to Resolution No. 478 of 2014 was necessary. He apprised both repairs were completed a few nights ago, which required the water supply to the building being turned off. He commented there was no impact to resident care, as back up water

systems were utilized during the repair.

Motion was made by Mr. Taylor, seconded by Mr. Conover and carried unanimously to approve the request as presented and the necessary resolution was authorized for the November 21, 2014 Board meeting. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes.*

Mr. Cote presented a request to amend the Departmental Table of Organization to abolish the position of part-time Leisure Activity Aide #1, grade 3, annual base salary of \$24,699 prorated to 24 hours per week, and reduce the hours of the part-time Leisure Activity Aide #2, grade 3, annual base salary of \$24,699 prorated to 24 hours, from 24 hours to no more than 8 hours per week, as well as to create and fill the position of full-time Leisure Activity Aide #3, grade 3, annual base salary of \$24,699. He explained the full-time position that was being created would be filled with the employee currently working on a part-time basis. He continued, since the position that was being reduced from 24 to 8 hours per week was vacant there would be no impact on an employee. Mr. Conover asked if the request was budget neutral and Mr. Cote replied affirmatively.

Motion was made by Mrs. Frasier, seconded by Mr. McDevitt and carried unanimously to approve the request as presented and forward same to the Personnel Committee. *Copies of the Request to Create New Position and Notice of Intent to Fill Vacant Position forms are on file with the minutes.*

Betsy Henkel, Comptroller, presented a request for transfer of funds between various Budget Codes totaling \$11,300. She explained the transfers were required to ensure a sufficient amount of funding was available to cover overtime costs for RN's (Registered Nurses), as well as purchasing equipment such as bands, wander guards, etc for the residents.

Motion was made by Mr. Taylor, seconded by Mr. Conover and carried unanimously to approve the request as presented and forward same to the Finance Committee. *A copy of the Request for Transfer of Funds is on file with the minutes.*

Pertaining to the Overtime Report, Ms. Henkel advised they were within the amount budgeted for 2014; however, she said, the numbers seemed slightly distorted due to the creation of several part-time positions. She pointed out overall they were slightly under their expenses as compared to this time last year.

With regards to Staffing, Mr. Cote apprised there were several vacant positions within the Nursing Department. He said they were pleased with the response they received from an ad they placed for the vacant positions and interviewing would commence this week. He reminded the Committee the vacant shifts were covered with overtime, per diem employees and Agency Nurses. He noted all of the key management positions were filled. He said he felt they were doing a good job retaining the staff they had. He stated even though there were no active Workers Compensation cases at this time there were about six employees out of work on disability for various reasons such as maternity leave. He advised he anticipated these employees would be returning by the end of November to early December.

Mr. Cote advised the facility would be participating in an emergency drill on October 30, 2014 with the Queensbury Fire Department. He stated this drill would count as one of the two major drill per year the State required the facility to participate in. He said the water main pipe repair was counted as the other major drill required since they operated without the main water supply to the building for about eight hours.

Mr. Cote reminded the Committee they were approaching the timeframe when New York State Department of Health would be completing an inspection, as the previous inspection was completed in December of 2013. He explained the inspection could take place anytime between now and March of 2015.

Mr. Cote stated as of today 76 of the 80 beds available at the facility were filled, of which a few would be discharged next week. He noted many individuals preferred the Westmount Health Facility over that of others due to their stellar reputation in the community.

Mr. Conover questioned whether the water main pipe repair came in under budget and Mr. Cote replied affirmatively. He explained there was quite a variation in the range of estimates they received. Ms. Henkel stated they were under budget because she used the highest estimate of \$22,000 for budgeting purposes and the actual cost was around \$6,800.

Travis Whitehead, resident of the Town of Queensbury, questioned whether the Year 9 Guaranteed Savings Report from Siemens Industry, Inc., was available, as he had requested to review it a few weeks ago and Mr. Sokol replied he was unsure, as the gentlemen who could answer the question were not in attendance. Mr. Whitehead pointed out the annual budget included \$10,000 for this report; therefore, he said, if the money was paid for the report he was requesting to know where the report was, as he felt it was an issue of misappropriating public funds. Mr. Whitehead advised he had the following questions for the gentlemen who were not in attendance:

- 1) Did the County pay the \$10,000 for the report; and
- 2) if the report was paid for, where is it and if it was not paid for, who made this determination, as it was quite clear in the contract with Siemens Industry, Inc. that if we for any reason decide not to pay for the report then the County would give up all rights towards claims.

Ms. Seeber asked if it was possible to see if Paul Dusek, County Administrator, was available to address Mr. Whitehead's concerns. Joan Sady Clerk of the Board, left the meeting briefly, and upon return advised that Mr. Dusek was on a conference call and was unavailable at this time. Mr. Sokol informed Mr. Whitehead that his inquiry could either be addressed via email by Mr. Dusek, or possibly discussed at the special Health Services Committee meeting which he anticipated would be scheduled in the next week or so.

As there was no further business to come before the Health Services Committee, on motion made by Mr. Conover and seconded by Mr. Taylor, Mr. Sokol adjourned the meeting at 10:42 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Sarah McLenithan, Secretary to the Clerk of the Board